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FM AMEMBASSY BRATISLAVA
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INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA 0013

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRATISLAVA 000359

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [CU](#) [LO](#)
SUBJECT: CUBA PULLS AMBASSADOR TO SLOVAKIA, MAY DOWNGRADE
RELATIONS

REF: 05 BRATISLAVA 922

Classified By: DCM Lawrence R. Silverman for Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

¶1. (C) Slovak MFA Director for the Americas Dusan Kristofik told us May 4 that the Cuban Ambassador to the Slovak Republic had departed recently "without saying goodbye," and that the GOS did not receive any farewell calls. In fact, Kristofik told us that the MFA found out of the Ambassador's departure two weeks after the fact, when they received a diplomatic note from the Cuban Embassy's Charge d'Affaires. Kristofik tells us that he is unsure as to whether the Cubans will downgrade the head of mission to the Charge level, but they have heard nothing from Havana about a replacement for the departed Ambassador.

¶2. (C) COMMENT: Slovakia's Embassy in Cuba has been keeping busy on the island, visiting dissidents and getting involved in a tiff with the Castro regime after it was caught receiving dissident materials from Miami. These actions probably factored into Cuba's decision to pull the Ambassador back as a sign of its displeasure. One thing is certain, though: the Cuban government is certainly refraining from a "charm offensive" in advance of the June reevaluation of the EU's "engagement" strategy with the Castro regime. The Slovaks, already skeptical of the carrot, may represent a voice for the stick during EU discussions.
VALLEE